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CLASSIFICATION: ~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~
SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

CD NO.

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF INFORMATION 1950

SUBJECT Political; Military - Army, security forces

DATE DIST. 12 Dec 1952

NO. OF PAGES 21

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. 14

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SPECIAL SECTIONS IN THE SOVIET ARMY

A. Organization of Special Sections

One of the administrations of the Ministry of State Security USSR is the Administration for Counterintelligence in the Army, otherwise known as the "special section." At the beginning of the last war, the special sections were retitled "SMERSH," an abbreviation of "Death to Spies," but they resumed their former name at the end of the war.

The special sections in the Soviet Army, Navy, and MVD troops are, in reality, not limited in function to counterintelligence, i. e., combatting spies, in spite of their formal purpose and official name. They carry on a close secret surveillance of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, and, in time of war, have a number of other functions.

The organizational structure of special sections corresponds to that of central administrations of the Ministry of the Armed Forces (reorganized into the War Ministry and Navy Ministry in March 1959), higher staffs, military educational institutions, and troop units up to and including the division (including staffs of detached brigades).

The special sections have their own personnel, the number depending upon the size of the military administration or staff. The chain of command of the special sections corresponds to that of the army, up to the staffs of military districts and attached armies in peacetime, and up to staffs of groups of armies (front) in wartime. The special sections of these higher staffs are directly subordinate to the Administration for Counterintelligence in the Army, NRB WZRN. The special sections of central administrations of the War Ministry and of the General Staff Academy are directly subordinate to their administration in the NRB WZRN, by-passing the special sections of military districts, regardless of the military district in which they are located.

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The special section within the War Ministry operates only within the ministry, and the lower level special sections are not subordinate to it.

There are no special sections in army units below the division (detached brigade) level. Instead, these lower echelons contain permanently attached operative authorized representatives (operativnyye upolnomochennyye) from divisional special sections. In each regiment there may be one or more such authorized representatives, one of whom is placed in charge. The lower working apparatus of authorized representatives of special sections in military units consists of agent-informers working for the special sections, who are recruited from among servicemen in all unit subdivisions. Up to approximately 3 percent of the personnel of a unit are agent-informers of the special sections. They are divided evenly among the unit's subdivisions and in such a way that there is at least one informer to every platoon. It should be noted that in such troops as those of the navy, air force, and tank corps, as well as in all types of MGB troops, the proportional size of the special section agent network is greater.

Chiefs of special sections among troops and in administrations, as well as authorized representatives of special sections in the units, are subordinate officially to the commanders and chiefs of military units, detachments, and administration. At the same time, however, they are subordinate to the chiefs of the special sections of higher military units on Cheka lines. In reality, special sections are not, nor can they be, subordinate to commanders and political organs of military units. The "subordination" means only that the chiefs or authorized representatives of the special sections inform their unit commanders of minor events made known to them by their agents. Actually, such information is confined to questions involving violations of military and civil regulations and amoral behavior. As for questions of a political nature, the special sections inform their unit commanders and political organs only when it is unavoidable and the intervention and exercise of command authority are required, or when it becomes necessary that a commander, chief, or military-political organ know of an event which entails the application of such measures on the part of the special sections as the undertaking of an investigation, an arrest, or the handing over of a case for court action. But even in those cases, the military and political commanders are informed only with the approval of a higher special section.

In their practical work, the chiefs and authorized representatives of the special sections are closely associated with deputy commanders for political affairs and with chiefs of the political sections.

The military officer -- commander of a detachment or unit -- does not have the right to require of his special section an accounting of its work, to interfere in its procedures, or to give it orders. Whenever orders are given the special sections by commanders, it is done on the basis of mutual agreement. Cases do occur where a commander, out of thoughtlessness, attempts to interfere in the work of his special section; then, at best, he receives a polite hint about exceeding his rights. Persistent interference usually leads to the intervention of the commander's immediate superior, who, under the prodding of a higher special section, appeases the commander who has violated the ethics of relations between the special sections and military commanders. The interrelationship of higher military commanders and special sections is somewhat modified by the weight of a commander's authority, importance, and influence. Nevertheless, the outward subordination of the special sections to unit commanders is always observed. Special section officers adhere strictly to the regulations governing their relationships with military commanders.

B. Organization of Work of Special Sections

The army special section have the following functions:

1. To combat espionage through disclosure of foreign agents and their aides.

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2. To combat counterrevolution, sabotage, wrecking, negligence, and abuse.
3. To investigate the enlisted personnel and individual servicemen for their political reliability and the state of their morale.
4. To share, investigate, and control the life, duties, activities, and training of the personnel of staffs and administrations.
5. To keep informed of the work of civilian employees serving military institutions and detachments; to keep informed of the military training of troops and the degree of its fulfillment; to uncover the reasons for nonfulfillment of work and military training plans, and similar shortcomings.
6. To determine, through their agents, the state of mind of individual soldiers, and to uncover all possible deviations.
7. To keep under surveillance the system of supplying provisions and materiel.
8. To keep under surveillance emergency supplies and the way in which they are stored and utilized.
9. To supervise rules governing the safeguarding and use of secret documents and the keeping of military and state secrets in general.
10. To investigate all extraordinary incidents (Ch P) and crimes committed by soldiers.

In essence, army special sections perform the same functions within their units, detachments, administrations, and military educational institutions as do territorial organs of the Ministry of State Security in respect to the population, industrial enterprises, and soviet and party organizations which are encompassed by the territory within their jurisdiction.

The special sections maintain close contact with all local organs of State Security in areas where their troops are located. The special sections use these local organs to coordinate and to supplement whatever problems they may be working on.

In their daily work, as stated earlier, the special sections are closely tied in with army political and party organizations. Certain problems of these latter organizations coincide to a great extent with those of special sections; for instance: (1) the political and moral condition of individual soldiers, as well as of subdivisions, units, and detachments as a whole; (2) deviations from the established political line, violations of army regulations, negligence and abuse of duty; (3) manifestations of anti-soviet sentiments and commission of amoral acts by troops; (4) the progress of military and political training; and (5) the planning and continuity of the supply system, etc.

Despite the similar tasks which confront both political organs and the special sections, the two groups carry on their work completely independently of each other. In the majority of cases, each employs its own methods and forms, which, at times, have their similarities. For instance the special sections have their own agent-informer net. Despite this, the political apparatus also organizes its own agent-informer net, consisting for the most part of party and Komsomol members. The special sections control the private correspondence of troops, and in certain cases the same thing is also done by political organs, etc.

Contact between the special sections and political organs is achieved through their continual professional association (though they do not coordinate their work), by discussion of something which has taken place in their units, by partial exchange of information, common agreement on various questions and official measures, etc.

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For the most part, all of the work of army special sections depends upon the activity of the agents, which includes surveillance, record-keeping, investigation, and study. Although the conduct of counterintelligence work is the official purpose of army special sections, actually, they are occupied least of all with it. Even during the last war it was seldom that organs of SMERSH uncovered the activity of enemy intelligence agents; even less frequently did they uncover spy organizations or collaborators among members of the armed forces. This is by no means due to inefficiency. There is another explanation for it.

The fact is that the work of the special sections in the army is oriented literally toward guaranteeing state security and the political reliability of the army, in the Soviet sense. The special sections, first of all, look for this danger among army personnel -- among the soldiers, officers, generals, and marshals, regardless of party membership. As far as organs of State Security and the special sections in particular are concerned, neither rank, public position, army position, nor party membership exist. They are concerned only with people and their conduct. Every serviceman, regardless of his position, is looked upon first of all, as a potential traitor, and the higher his position the more dangerous he could be to the government. As a result, a continual and careful surveillance is maintained to find out whether or not the serviceman is committing an offense, and whether he should be rendered harmless."

The army special sections do not have to concern themselves with counter-espionage or with uncovering counterrevolutionary organizations; for, due to the shrewd way in which State Security organs within the army operate, neither the one nor the other can be begun or developed. The special sections have their tentacles wrapped about the entire army organism, feeling out the slightest vacillation and immediately reacting to each deviation, however insignificant, by taking the most radical repressive measures against it. The presence of such a system eliminates any opportunity for violation of "state interests." It is this which explains why the special sections of the Soviet Army do not uncover and cannot uncover really serious cases; for such potentially serious cases are nipped in the bud. Thus, if fertile soil were sown with high-quality seed, but the little shoots were plucked as soon as they appeared on the surface, plants could not thrive, even if all the other conditions were favorable for their growth.

The sharp weapons of the special sections are directed at even the smallest matters, and, in this way, they prevent the growth and development of such matters into overt and dangerous forms. Thus, the activity of the special sections is both profitable and necessary for the existence of the Soviet state. Herein lies the entire meaning and purpose of the work of army special sections and of the organs of State Security, in general, in relation to the entire population of the Soviet Union.

All records and reports, transmitted from army special sections and political organs to their superiors regarding conditions in units and detachments, are drawn up by these organs independently of each other, and do not necessarily agree. Moreover, the special sections have the right to acquaint themselves with political reports, records, and measures, while reciprocal rights are denied political organs regarding the reports, records, and measures undertaken by special sections.

The special sections maintain overt and covert control over the activities of both military commanders and the party and political apparatus of the troops. Party and political organs do not have the right nor the opportunity to control the activities of the special sections. The only recourse available to army, political, and party personnel in the event of misunderstandings with the special sections is to carry their complaints or grievances, through their superior officers, to a higher organ of the special section, a practice which rarely leads to satisfying the initiator of such grievances and complaints.

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For their reports, as well as for their particular orientation on conditions among the troops, the special sections depend on the findings of the personal studies of the units which they serve and on data sent in by their agents, as well as on all official data collected by army units and army political and party organs. There can be no secret from the special sections on any question concerning the troops. The work of the special sections is not publicized or made known to anyone.

C. Participation of Special Sections in Army Life and Activity

Special sections participate in all of the life and activity of the troops, whom they keep under surveillance and study. This participation and study consists of a routine wherein heads of the special sections and their authorized representatives regularly:

1. Attend all meetings, gatherings, and conferences held by troops. The unit commander does not have the right not to invite the special section chief or authorized representative to such meetings.
2. Take part in all troop training, maneuvers, reviews, inspections, etc. Periodically, at their discretion, they attend daily training exercises for enlisted and officer personnel.
3. Take part in all of the more important commissions which are organized by units and detachments for one reason or another.
4. Have access to secret and top secret files of staffs and administrations.
5. Have the right, even without the knowledge of the commanding officer or chief (out of consideration for army ethics, commanding officers are usually consulted), to examine the economic operations of the units, their military stores, estimates and accounts, monetary funds, reserve funds, their equipment, their system of keeping, safeguarding, and utilizing secret documents, etc.
6. Carry out inquiry and investigation of all incidents and the more important misdeeds of troops, regardless of any other investigations by regular army or political organs.
7. Organize and direct the agent network, charging their agents with investigating all service personnel, regardless of their rank, as the occasion warrants.
8. Conduct special investigations of the personnel of their units, staffs, and administrations, supplementing their information with the help of local organs of State Security.

The entire life of the unit, detachment, and of the individual soldier of the Soviet Army is studied and is under the constant multiple control of the regular army staff, the party and political apparatus, and the special sections. Army officers are under the control of both their superior officers and officers of political organs and the special sections, who may be either their equals in rank or their subordinates. Officers of political organs, in turn, are controlled by higher political organs and officers of the special sections. Officers of the special sections control and check each other in the same manner.

Chiefs of the special sections and their authorized representatives take part in rating officer personnel of all the services, including the political. The service ratings of officers of the political service are drawn up over the heads of army chiefs only through the political sections' chain of command with the participation of the special sections. In rating special section officers, neither political nor regular army officers take part; such ratings are made through the special Cheka chain of command of higher special sections.

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Special sections, their chiefs, and authorized representatives do not have the right to interfere openly with the actions and measures of regular army and political officers, even when these latter are in subordinate echelons. They do not have the right to express openly any opinions contrary to the decisions made by regular army and political officers, even if they disagree with them. Special section officers do not enjoy disciplinary rights over servicemen. They must only observe and immediately report everything to their higher organs. When the special sections find it necessary to intervene in an act of army or political heads, they do so through higher special section echelons, which then exert influence upon the corresponding army and political officers.

The special sections must always be fully informed about conditions in their units and detachments. They must be fully posted as to the business, intentions, and measures of commanding officers, and of the political organs and party organizations of the troops.

D. Technique of Recruiting Agents

Agent-informers are recruited by the special sections from among the personnel of troop units, staffs, and administrations which they serve. Special section informers are recruited from the ranks of privates and noncommissioned officers, as well as from officer personnel. Agent-informers are either newly recruited or transferred from other units.

Authorized representatives of the special sections usually conduct the recruitment of agent-informers, but, in certain instances, chiefs of the special sections themselves recruit people, even in high army echelons. Recruitment of agents proceeds according to the rules prevailing in organs of State Security, but special army considerations somewhat alter the form of recruitment and the organization and operation of the agent network. Before the actual recruitment, special section authorized representatives carefully investigate and study the individuals. The authorized representatives talk with such persons to determine their character and inclinations; and only after determining the feasibility of their being used as informers is their recruitment begun.

The criteria by which special section officers are usually guided in recruiting agent-informers are as follows:

1. The person's natural inclination toward informer activity is general.
2. Soviet enthusiasm and the person's own understanding of the necessity for dedication and vigilance.
3. Effort on the part of the nominee to recommend himself favorably to special sections and to curry favor.
4. The presence of discontent with something or somebody, grudges, bitterness, desire for revenge, and manifestations of lower human characteristics in general.
5. Unscrupulousness and weakness of character.
6. Various circumstances which might force an individual to become an informer.

To illustrate the qualities enumerated above and the way in which recruitment is conducted, it may be of interest to cite the following typical cases:

A soldier or officer secretly comes to a special section or to an authorized representative on his own initiative and reports something "interesting;" he then willingly agrees to the proposal to become a regular active informer.

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The special section selects the "right person" from among soldiers or officers. After having made inquiries about this person through his commanders or political officers, through the party of Komsomol organization, as well as through its own agents, the special section then makes a provisional decision about the acceptability and possibility of recruiting this person. If the decision is in his favor, the person is either summoned under some pretext, plausible to him and to others, for an interview, or is talked to during a chance encounter or at some other suitable occasion. During the talks, the proposal is carefully made that the person carry out an assignment which is unimportant and calculated not to offend his dignity. If such an assignment is accepted, and, depending on the way in which it is accepted, after two or three similar meetings and assignments the proposal to become a regular informer is made.

An investigation of some case or other is conducted by an authorized representative of a special section. The "right person" turns up among the defendants or witnesses -- one who eagerly and energetically testifies against his comrades, officers, and subordinates. This is already a "good sign," and after a short talk recruitment follows.

A soldier or officer is in poor standing with his superiors. He is lazy, incapable, negligent, and does not enjoy respect in the eyes of his superiors and colleagues. He is, possibly, unsociable by nature, secretive, and reticent. As a result, he is bitter toward everyone and everything. This man is summoned before the special section or an authorized representative. In sympathetic tones they talk with him about his lack of success in the service and wonder about the reasons. As is always the case in such circumstances, the "failure" seeks to vindicate himself by blaming his superiors, his colleagues, circumstances, etc. The special section or authorized representative is "warmly sympathetic;" they "understand" him; they try to give him moral "support;" they encourage him, and together they decide how he can combat these "injustices." Such a person begins to give information to the special section and becomes an active agent-informer.

A special section receives compromising information about a soldier or officer, information which is not of a serious enough nature to mark him as definitely unreliable, but which, nevertheless, could be bad for his military record. Or, a soldier or officer is called to account by a special section for something he has done, something which, however, cannot involve him in particularly serious legal consequences. In discussing the circumstances of his case, the special sections intentionally exaggerate and paint a very gloomy picture for the soldier. In this way, the special section tries to depress the man morally and put him into a dependent position. An escape from these "threatening" circumstances is offered him if he will agree to "aid" the work of the special section, which, in return, will "hush up the affair" and arrange matters so that the accused will escape responsibility and "even court action."

By such methods is the recruitment of new agents conducted. The methods of recruitment are extraordinarily varied, and all means are used and applied, even those of forgery and provocation, in individual cases where it is necessary to recruit a needed person and to force him to work as an agent, regardless of his reluctance to do so.

The transfer of agent-informers from one unit to another is common. Transfers are made in the following cases:

A soldier or officer who is an agent-informer in a unit or administration is transferred to another place of service. The special section gives its data on this person to the special section at his new place of assignment, recommending that he be drawn into informer work there. At his new station, even if the serviceman himself does not report to the special section or identify himself as an informer, he is summoned and unceremoniously assigned to work as an agent, being informed that his past agent activity is well known.

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Into a unit come new recruits, and if any one of them, although without previous military service, was an informer while a student or worker in industry or agriculture, the responsible special section of the civilian enterprise will report this fact through local territorial organs of the Ministry of State Security to the unit to which the recruit is assigned. New recruits are usually accompanied to their places of assignment by reception officers and political officers. These officers set up a network of informers among the recruits for the travel period, a network composed primarily of party and Komsomol members. This network, set up before or during the actual troop movement, is transferred upon arrival to the place of assignment.

A soldier agent-informer is transferred at the request of the special section from one subdivision of his unit to another, or to some other type of work where agent surveillance is necessary. Such transfers initiated by special sections are officially carried out in a covert manner and, in the majority of cases, under the guise of a step taken by the political unit. This is the method practiced in cases involving privates or noncommissioned officers. The transferred soldier-informer is then placed at the disposal of the authorized representative in charge of the particular operation or subdivision.

When authorized representatives serving some military unit or institution are transferred, the entire agent-informer network is handed over to the new authorized representative, who continues its work.

The recruited agent-informers sign a written pledge that they will reveal, to the best of their ability, all activities directed "against the interests of the state," party, and government, and report everything that becomes known to them about anyone, regardless of who it may be, including even their own military superiors. In addition, they sign written promises not to reveal the secrets, forms, and methods of operation of special sections. Before making these pledges they are warned that they will be held responsible for any violation of the obligations taken.

The special section keeps a personnel file and card on each agent-informer, and these materials are treated as top secret documents. In these personnel files, in addition to purely personal data, the informer's activity, his references, and an evaluation of his work as an agent-informer are recorded.

Agent-informers have special sobriquets or pseudonyms. Examples of sobriquets are: "Tiger," "Ear," "Owl," "vigilant," "Alert," etc. Pseudonyms are in the form of an abbreviated first name: "Vanya," "Basha," "Petya," etc., or some fictitious family name. In submitting written information, agent-informers disguise their handwriting and sign their sobriquets or pseudonyms.

Agent-informers who have proved to be good workers may, if they wish, be recommended by special sections for regular work in organs of the Ministry of State Security upon completion of their army service, and they are aided in arranging for such work.

F. Organization of Informer Work and the Planting of Agents

The authorized representatives of special sections in military units and institutions are organizers and directors of the agent network. As a rule, authorized representatives direct their network personally, and, in contrast to agent networks working among the civilian population, they cannot delegate their authority to a deputy (resident).

To conceal their connections with the agent network and to cover up their meetings, authorized representatives of special sections always conduct investigations of both important and unimportant matters and, under this pretext, summon various people for questioning. Meetings between authorized representatives of special sections and their agent-informers are usually held at a time when they will be least

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noticeable to others. For example, during the night duty of officer and soldier agent-informers (except when on guard duty), during sick call, during leaves under the pretext of going to town, in other words, at such times when army personnel are most free and when their movements are least supervised.

Authorized representatives of special sections in army units have their own work quarters, isolated from regular staff and other unit offices. In many cases they work in separate buildings, but, in any event, their offices have a private entrance. Nevertheless, meetings with the agent network is arranged for some neutral place hidden from possible surveillance. Agent-informer information is usually reported verbally, but if the situation demands and if the information is important, it is submitted in written form. Meetings, conversations, information, instructions, and the giving of assignments always take place on an individual basis. As a rule, an agent-informer works alone, and agents are not supposed to know one another.

In army units almost all informers are usually quickly found out, no matter how they try to hide or mask their activity. The soldiers have nothing but scorn for them. Commanding officers usually try to rid their units of informers and constantly pick on them. It is very difficult to conceal informer activity under army conditions, where each hour of time is strictly controlled and each step a soldier takes is counted by his corporal. Therefore, for recruiting informers the authorized representatives of special sections are more interested in the so-called privileged group of the lower ranks, such as sergeants, company or staff clerks, quartermaster sergeants, supply sergeants, heads of messes, workshops, storehouses, party reading rooms, and libraries, secretaries of primary Komsomol and party organizations, and other so-called lower rank aristocrats. This, however, does not solve the problem fully, and special sections cannot completely dispense with the recruitment into informer activity of ordinary enlisted men and non-commissioned officers, because, under existing rules, each subdivision up to and including the platoon must have not less than one agent-informer.

Officers for agent-informer activity are recruited chiefly and preferably from staff workers. Because of the nature of their work these officers are in close contact with the commanders of units and their subdivisions, which gives them the opportunity for frequent communication with higher and lower officer personnel and with all servicemen of a unit. In addition, working on the staffs, they have a greater opportunity to associate with authorized representatives of special sections with less notice. Officer agent-informers are usually given assignments involving the investigation and surveillance of fellow officers, including their senior officers. Not only the unit command staff, but the political and party apparatus are under the surveillance of special sections.

Assignments of agent-informers are usually limited and concrete, as for example:

To report each case of drunkenness among servicemen, or even those with liquor on their breath.

To report each case of a superior insulting a subordinate.

To report every violation of any army order.

To report every violation of the rules involving the safeguarding or use of secret documents.

To report every manifestation of an anti-Soviet feeling, the person involved, and the manner in which expressed.

To report the behavior of particular individuals under certain specified circumstances.

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To engage certain people in conversations on a predetermined subject of a political nature and to report the person's reactions.

To reveal the subject of the conversation between particular individuals on certain occasions.

To reveal the places frequented by and the acquaintances of some serviceman or other, and also the nature of his association with certain other individuals.

To find out the relationships between certain people.

To determine the nature of any staff work done at night by some officer, etc.

The above enumeration shows the minute details upon which the attention of special sections is concentrated and the conditions under which a serviceman finds himself, with his every word and deed reported by a large network of agents and studied by special sections.

Special sections sometimes use "baiting" measures for a special purpose, such as stealing a secret document from a staff officer to check on his vigilance or to place him in a compromising position regarding the special section, or planting some compromising letter, or making a provocative suggestion, etc.

The "baiting" character of special section activity can be illustrated by the following examples:

In 1942, the 216th Regiment of the 81st Cavalry Division was stationed at the fortress of Kushka. The garrison was located 1 1/2 kilometers from the Afghan border. Because of the numerous cases of desertion of Red Army soldiers and their escape into Afghanistan, an order was given that guard posts and other duty details be manned at night by not less than two men.

One night two soldiers were on duty guarding a storehouse, and in the course of their "intimate" conversation one of them expressed the desire to run away to Afghanistan. The other agreed in principle, but expressed his fear that after his flight repressive measures would be taken against his family. They agreed not to act upon their decision to flee until a later date.

On the following day, even before the guard was changed, the soldier who had agreed to the suggestion to flee was arrested by the special section. After several days a show-trial was held at a visiting session of the military tribunal of the 6th Cavalry Corps, and the soldier was charged with attempting to go over to the side of a foreign government. The tribunal sentenced the "guilty man" to 10 years' deprivation of freedom for betraying his country, postponing the execution of the sentence until after the end of the war. But, to give the accused an opportunity to atone for the crime and to prove his devotion to his country, the military tribunal decided to transfer him to a front-line penal battalion.

In August of 1943, the 144th Rifle Division was defending a portion of the central front in the region of Yatsvo. Advance guard posts were set out in front of the main lines of defense. One of these posts, several hundred meters from the German positions, was manned by two soldiers. One night they agreed to use this opportunity to cross over to the German side. After they had started for the German lines, one of the soldiers disarmed the other, led him back to their unit, and turned him over to the authorized representative of SMERSH. A field military court, convened the next day, convicted the soldier of treason; he was sentenced to pay the supreme penalty and was executed at the front.

The soldier who had turned in his comrade was well known as a "seksot" -- a secret collaborator of SMERSH. After several days, this informer was found stabbed to death in a forest within the unit area.

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During peacetime, if a military agent-informer has gone so far with his conspiratorial work that he cannot continue his informer activity and, as a result, is threatened by retaliation on the part of his comrades, he is transferred to another unit as far away as possible, where there will not be even a chance contact with any soldiers who knew him before. But such transfers occur very rarely, since it would be impossible to transfer all those who are exposed as informers. As already stated, informers in units are discovered by their comrades and are avoided by them. But there are also occasions when informers are beaten up. They are "blinded" by an overcoat or blanket, then assaulted. The person beaten thus cannot see his assailants and by the time he is free of the blanket or overcoat there is no one around him.

Special sections regulate the planting of agents in unit subdivisions, in sections of staffs and administrations. If a network of agents is to be found in all unit subdivisions up to and including the platoon, not a single division or divisional component (unit or department) of a staff or administration can be without a network of agent-informers. The more important the division or unit of the administration or staff, the more intricate the agent network, up to the level of higher military staffs and administrations, inclusively.

In addition to the regular net of agent-informers created by recruitment from military personnel working in staffs and administrations, a net of agent informers is also created from among draft-exempt civilian employees.

In addition to such a regular system of agent-informers, it sometimes becomes necessary in the more serious investigations to plant a special staff agent network, which has as its special assignment the investigation of some responsible person or group of persons. In certain cases, a person is so closely watched by a specially planted network of agents that he does not escape surveillance for a single minute. The entire private and army life and activity of such a person then come under the unremitting control of special sections. For example, in the case of some high-ranking army officer under investigation, agents are assigned as his personal chauffeur, domestic servant, secretary or adjutant, clerk or typist. The special agent network will relentlessly and unobtrusively carry on its surveillance of the person. Thus, the high-ranking officer will be surrounded by a planted network of agents.

If it is inopportune or difficult to plant agents around a certain person, then persons already close to him are recruited as agents.

From the very moment of the arrival of a new contingent of Red Army soldiers in a unit, even while they still are under quarantine, special sections begin their recruitment. For this purpose authorized representatives of special sections remain in quarantine for days; under a plausible pretext they summon the rookies, talk with them, and recruit agent-informers. With the end of the quarantine and the assignment of new recruits to unit subdivisions, authorized representatives of special sections send to deputy commanders for political affairs a list of those men they have recruited as informers, with instructions as to which units or subdivisions they are to be sent. This is done with strict observance of secrecy. The deputy commander for political affairs, naturally, well knows the purpose for such assignment and gives the staff instructions on the proper assignment of these people, thus concealing the orders of special sections with his own.

Special sections do this in the form of a request, and not as an order (for they do not have such a right), but it is impossible to refuse such "requests," since they are equivalent to a command from above.

Occasionally, special sections turn to the unit commanders, though in the majority of cases they again proceed through deputy commanders for political affairs, with a request for the transfer of one or another soldier from one subdivision to another, or the assignment of someone to some function, for example, as head of a mess, workshop, etc. This is done for the purpose of introducing agents where they are lacking.

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Special sections make similar arrangements and appointments through unit or political commanders in the case of graduates of noncommissioned officers' schools. Usually, young noncommissioned officers, upon graduating from regimental and divisional schools, are supposed to be sent back to their old unit and unit subdivision. In practice, it often happens that certain graduates are assigned by special sections to other units and subdivisions, and the protests of their old unit commanders (who, in the majority of cases, do not understand the reasons for it) will have no effect.

Of the privates and noncommissioned personnel who have responsible positions in a unit, the following must always be agent-informers of special sections: all company clerks and certain clerks in all battalion and regimental staffs as well as in higher detachments, heads of company party reading rooms, secretaries of primary party and Komsomol organizations, and other persons who have more freedom of action and opportunity for greater contact with privates and noncommissioned and officer personnel.

In addition to officers recruited individually on the strength of their special inclination for collaboration with special sections, all officers of the political service are, for all practical purposes, informers. Naturally, it would be wrong to call, for example, a regimental or divisional deputy commander for political affairs or a chief of a political section of a division or corps an agent-informer for a special section. This would be both unnatural and, at first glance, illogical; nevertheless, in the strictest sense of the word, they are certainly all informers for special sections. Their very aim obliges all political officers up to the highest levels to maintain close contact with special sections in the course of their work and to inform them of all violations of "state interests" and all manifestations of anti-Soviet feelings in their units. They must report any symptoms of political unreliability on the part of individual servicemen, including their equals in rank and even their superiors, if they have information about them. The difference between such information and that gathered by special section workers lies only in the scale, importance, and methods of procuring the information. For example, if a chief of a political section of a division or corps, or the deputy commander for political affairs notices something suspicious about his commanding officer or is aware of an amoral act committed by him, then this high-ranking officer or even general of the political service must immediately report this fact to the proper special section. A comparison of such information with the information contained in a report by a soldier-informer of his platoon or section commander will reveal no substantial difference.

It is true that under the existing situation special sections must keep army political organs and deputy commanders for political affairs informed about any information in their possession on individual servicemen. The exchange of such information thus appears to be mutual, but, in practice, special sections never tell a political officer everything they know and do not risk anything thereby. On the other hand, political organs have much to risk through failure to fulfill their obligation.

7. Other Types of Activity of Special Sections

Special sections and their authorized representatives in military units, staffs, and administrations conduct investigations of all extraordinary incidents (ChP).

The following cases are classified as extraordinary incidents:

Unfortunate occurrences involving the crippling or death of servicemen.

Embezzlement and abuse of property by servicemen or other persons, entailing loss to the military unit.

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Fires, explosions, wrecks within the unit area.

Open display of anti-Soviet feeling, particularly on the part of a group of servicemen.

Loss or damage of weapons or materiel.

Desertion.

Suicide, self-wounding, or self-crippling.

Group drunkenness of servicemen, especially in connection with a riot, etc.

Investigations by special sections are conducted independently of investigations conducted by the army through the military chain of command. Through investigation, special sections establish the presence or absence of the corpus delicti, as well as the actual criminals and the extent of their crime.

As a result of an investigation, special sections determine:

1. Whether or not to take action on the matter in the absence of the corpus delicti and culprits.
2. Whether or not the problem is to be settled through disciplinary action and which commander has authority in the matter.
3. Whether or not to remand the accused for trial, to which court, and the category of the crime.

The future course of the case is then determined and, depending upon the decision made, the case can then either be made a matter of record for review, with no further action necessary, or be handed over to the unit commander for review and disciplinary action, or it can become the basis for the beginning of an inquiry and for a court trial. In the latter case special sections also decide which court has jurisdiction over a certain case, and which organ shall carry on the inquiry -- the special section itself or the investigation apparatus of the military tribunal.

The inquiry is a preliminary process, on the basis of which is determined the presence of the crime and the jurisdiction involved. Material gathered during the investigation becomes the basis for the inquiry.

The formal letter of the law leaves the decision to remand servicemen for trial in the hands of unit commanders, while the remanding of officers for trial is left to the decision of the Ministry of the Armed Forces USSR. But this is only the formal legal position; in reality, is hardly ever observed. If a serviceman is accused of any crime against the state which is covered by the 14 paragraphs of Article 53 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, such cases are never decided by military commanders, and the accused is charged, arrested, and tried by special sections, as a rule in closed sessions, and, in many instances, in absentia by the Special Conference of the Collegium of the MOB USSR. With the arrest and beginning of an inquiry into a crime against the state involving a serviceman, the commander is informed only after a decision as to the case has been reached by special sections and sometimes post facto, i.e., after the arrest of the serviceman. Other crimes are handled through regular military tribunals.

Often there are instances when some offense or crime has been committed and the military commander seeks to limit punishment to strict disciplinary action, but the special sections insist on bringing the accused to trial. In such cases the decision of special sections almost always bears greater weight.

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In such a way investigations of offenses and crimes are carried on simultaneously by unit commanders and by special sections.

As a result of an investigation which determines the presence of a crime and leads to a decision to bring the accused to trial, inquiries are conducted either by special sections or a military tribunal.

Upon completion of the inquiry, servicemen who are considered guilty are brought to trial by: (1) the Special Conference of the Collegium of the MGB (in the majority of cases the accused is tried in absentia), and (2) a military tribunal (in closed or open trial).

Crimes of servicemen are never subject to the jurisdiction of the local territorial courts or their investigating organs. In the Criminal Legal Code there is a statute on military offenses which determines the nature of military offenses and jurisdiction over them. Each offense committed by servicemen comes under an article of this statute. If civilians are accomplices, they also fall under this statute; and even if civilians, without the participation of servicemen, commit an offense connected with a military establishment, this too comes under the heading of a military offense.

In addition to its inquiry and investigative activity, special sections make a careful study of enlisted personnel and ascertain the degree of their political reliability. This study is conducted through:

1. Familiarization with references of servicemen and the service ratings assigned them by their commanders.
2. Study of party and Komsomol references of servicemen who are members or candidates for membership in the party and Komsomols.
3. Their network of informers and special secret agents.
4. The conduct of a special investigations, from which is derived information on the past of the servicemen himself and members of his family. Territorial organs of State Security play a large role in such investigations by the special section.

In studying individual servicemen to reach some conclusions as to their reliability, the special sections use not only official data received through unit staffs and political and party organs, and information resulting from special inquiries, but also data from their own agents and material of a special kind which is called political surveys of areas of troop recruitment. All these put together become the basis for the conclusions and deductions reached by special sections as to a particular serviceman.

Let us consider the political surveys. With the entrance of recruits into army units, depending, of course, upon the areas of the Soviet Union from which such recruits come, the special sections receive special political surveys of the particular recruitment area. These political surveys are top secret documents and the right to use them is restricted to a very few people.

These secret political surveys give the characteristics of the inhabitants of oblasts, rayons, and in some cases, even of individual villages. They reflect the economic and material condition of the population, its social structure, and its political reliability over various periods of time through the years. They also reflect the people's reaction to and the manner in which they carried out various governmental measures, as, for example, collectivization, changes in the Soviet constitution, introduction of new labor laws, taxes, state loans, and social security, and the general attitude of the people to the laws of Soviet government which are contrary to the interest of the workers.

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The following may be cited as examples of such laws: (1) the law tying down workers and employees to their enterprises, (2) the law introducing payment for education, (3) the law imposing imprisonment for being more than 20 minutes late on the job, (4) the law cutting maternity leave in half, (5) the law on the criminal liability of children, and the imprisonment of children from 12 years on up for criminal offenses, (6) the laws introducing various taxes, such as income and military taxes, the tax on those without children, etc, and (7) the law on compulsory salary deductions for government loans, etc.

These political surveys also point out cases of opposition by the inhabitants to state measures, and a description of such opposition. Political surveys are very useful to the special sections in helping them to determine the political and moral conditions of servicemen, and their political reliability in general. In particular, they provide special sections with material with which to approach servicemen on an individual basis.

The following cases, all of which occurred prior to 1950, are cited as examples:

A certain officer with the rank of captain was in command of a battalion. He came from Tambov Oblast, was 48 years old, and had been called up from the reserves not long before. In addition to all other data received by special sections via special investigations, agent investigators, service ratings, etc., political surveys acquainted the special sections with several new facts concerning this person. According to the political survey, in 1921, all of Tambov Oblast was involved in an anti-Soviet revolt. According to the personal data on this officer, in 1921 he was living in a village in Kirsanovskiy Rayon, Tambov Oblast. He was 19 at the time, and his brothers were 22 and 24. His father was 47.

Undoubtedly, someone from this family, and perhaps all of them, had participated in the armed revolt against the Soviet Army. Consequently, the special section drew the preliminary conclusion that the officer was undoubtedly of questionable political reputation and therefore unreliable. As a result, the special section began a special investigation, conducting a special inquiry for the purpose of uncovering compromising data not only on the officer himself, but also, on his brothers and father, data necessary to enable them to reach a final conclusion about the officer.

Still another example is that of a 28-year-old officer from the Crimean ASSR. A political survey revealed that the Crimean ASSR was liquidated after the war because, during the German occupation, the people had displayed particular unreliability in regard to Soviet rule. This officer had lived with his family under German occupation for 2 or 3 years; at that time he was 16 to 20 years old. It is natural to expect that he would be politically unreliable.

The question arises: how do such persons get into the army and become officers? This is entirely possible for the following reasons: first, special sections and other organs of State Security do not always uncover all the details which are pertinent to various people, and second, it happens very often that people in the Soviet Union conceal much about their past which cannot always be immediately established and which sometimes remains concealed for several years. It is precisely in such cases that political surveys of recruitment areas assist the special sections in their investigation of servicemen.

Such is the complex and laborious system used by the special sections to obtain information on people. To some degree, but on a smaller scale, studies of servicemen are made by political organs independently of those made by the special sections.

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The army evaluation of servicemen is based only on their personal qualities and ability. But the evaluation of the soldier's commanding officer is still far from sufficient for reaching a final conclusion about the serviceman, particularly about his army assignment. The main element in the evaluation of a serviceman is the political appraisal with which professional qualifications are compared; and the political appraisal is of greater significance for a man's career.

In rating servicemen of all grades, political organs and special sections participate together with the unit commander; no rating is ever made without the participation of these two organs, whose representatives must attach their signatures to the rating record.

In their personal study of servicemen special sections are concerned with the following: social origin and position; political preparation and participation in public activities; political reliability; morals; presence of a link with an alien element; military and private life; inclinations, weaknesses, interests, enthusiasm; and professional qualities and authoritativeness. What do these considerations involve? For the answer to this let us comment briefly on each of them:

1. Social Position and Origin

In the Soviet Union there are four gradations of social position: workers, kolkhozniks (or peasants), employees, and "others."

Workers are persons working in production, with the exception of engineer and technical personnel and employees.

Kolkhozniks (or peasants) are persons employed in agriculture, except agronomists, animal husbandrymen, veterinarians, kolkhoz and sovkhos office employees, and those employed in other related fields of agriculture.

Employees are office workers, engineer and technical personnel, various kinds of specialists, scientific workers, administrators, military personnel, political workers, artists, etc.

The "others" category includes the old, non-Soviet intelligentsia. In this category background and not position is considered. In the Soviet social structure there is no class of "others," as there are no peasants, since in the Soviet Union there are only kolkhozniks or sovkhos workers. Thus, like "others," the social group "peasantry" also refers to origin rather than position.

By social origin is understood the social group from which the person comes, and in many cases, particularly for persons of the older generation, this dates back to the pre-revolutionary period. Naturally, in the course of time, such persons become fewer and fewer.

If a person is descended from the intelligentsia of pre-revolutionary times, particularly from military or government officials, the clergy, landowners, factory owners, merchants, and others who belonged to the wealthy privileged social groups of Tsarist Russia, he belongs to the category "others" by virtue of his social background.

If a person is descended from a peasant family prior to the introduction of kolkhozes, then, in social position (sig), he will be "from the peasantry." By social position is implied the social group to which a person belongs at the present time, regardless of his background.

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For example, there may be the following combinations:

- Social origin -- "others"; social position -- worker
- Social origin -- peasant; social position -- kolkhoznik
- Social origin -- employee; social position -- employee
- Social origin -- worker; social position -- employee

Special sections attach greater significance to social origin than to social position, and greater attention is given to uncovering social origin.

2. Political Reliability

This is determined on the basis of results of special investigation and agents' information. What is considered here is a person's attitude toward Soviet rule, his statements, inclinations, and even participation or nonparticipation in social and political activity. Political organs usually participate in reaching a decision on political reliability. The political reliability of a card-carrying member of the party is, officially, not to be doubted. But this is only a formality, and as was said before, organs of State Security have no restrictions regarding investigations of and action directed against party and nonparty members and persons occupying high military posts.

3. Morals

Under this is included mode of life, particularly a tendency to drunkenness, gambling, all possible forms of perversion, passion for women, flirtatiousness, honesty, etc.

4. Link With Alien Elements

Under this is included personal acquaintance and contact with persons belonging to pre-Revolutionary privileged classes, who are usually referred to as the "has-beens." In addition, the declassed people belong to this alien element: criminals, persons without definite occupations, and the like. Also included are persons or relatives of persons sentenced in the present or past for crimes against the government. Such people are usually referred to as counterrevolutionaries.

5. Military and Private Life

This includes the attitude of servicemen to the service in general, and to execution of their military duties, their relations with their fellow servicemen, their attitude toward officers and subordinates, and their military successes or failures. It also includes the attitude of servicemen to their families, the character of their private pastimes and interests, and also the manner and mode of their life.

6. Associations, Inclinations, Weaknesses

A study is made of all personal associations, especially with persons living abroad. The character of the person, his inclinations, weaknesses, and all distinctive personal characteristics are also studied.

7. Professional Qualifications

The professional qualifications of a serviceman, from the viewpoint of the special sections, are of only secondary importance. On the other hand, an especially capable officer or general might be as dangerous as he is useful as

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far as his reliability is concerned. Professional qualifications are determined by the special sections through ratings of higher commanding officers, but this does not preclude the necessity of a personal study of this aspect of a serviceman's life, too.

All the elements constitute the individual study of each serviceman by the special sections. The importance and personality of a serviceman will determine the degree of attention paid to him by the special sections.

G. Peculiarities of Wartime Activity of Special Sections

In wartime the activity of army special sections may be divided into its work among forces in the field and in units located far behind the lines.

A somewhat general modification in the work of the special sections during wartime is the attenuation, but not elimination, of the emphasis on verifying the political reliability of servicemen. For example, at the end of 1941 an order was issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet USSR releasing from prison and camps servicemen who had committed crimes, even certain crimes covered by Article 58 of the Criminal Code RSFSR -- i.e., offenses directed against the state. Following this decree, the army special sections and the political sections of the troops received secret instructions indicating the possibility that their units might receive some of these servicemen. These instructions directed that a special surveillance of such persons be conducted and that these persons were not to be allowed to assume high responsible positions, regardless of their individual training and qualifications.

In the field army, personal virtues -- bravery, courage, decisiveness, ability to influence subordinates -- were the basic criteria for determining the quality of a soldier or officer. Everything else sank into the background. In wartime many things were permitted which would never have been allowed in the peacetime army.

The activity of the special sections in units located far behind the lines differs little from their peacetime activity, except for the lowering of requirements for all sorts of investigations. The stricter responsibility of special sections for offenses and crimes committed and the sharpened interest of special sections in such crimes are the only differences compared with peacetime. Military trials in units, particularly show-trials designed to influence enlisted personnel and to intimidate them, are held more frequently.

It is possible to cite a great number of examples of legal proceedings that were instituted artificially, in hopes of preventing certain offenses or of cutting down their frequency. They would show that those who were put on trial were accused of crimes having little to do with their actions. The following are examples.

In April 1942, in one of the regiments of the 81st Division stationed at the fortress of Kushka, a horse escaped from the stables one night. The Afghan border was not more than one kilometer away, and since the border both on the Afghan and Soviet side was guarded very poorly, the horse easily crossed into Afghan territory and remained there to graze. A Soviet soldier, in pursuit of the horse, unknowingly crossed into Afghan territory. The horse would not allow itself to be caught and, because of the soldier's attempts to catch him, ran further into Afghan territory. While pursuing the horse, the soldier happened onto an Afghan border village, where he was arrested by the Afghan border guard.

Within 3 days the soldier and the horse were returned to the Soviet border troops, who handed them over to their division. The soldier was immediately arrested and proceedings were begun, accusing him of desertion and of escape to

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Afghanistan. At the inquiry the authorized representative of the special section asked a number of questions which the soldier answered straightforwardly. These questions and answers, and also the conclusions drawn from them, are of extraordinary interest, and some of them, therefore, are included here.

Question: Were you interrogated in Afghanistan, about what, and what did you reply?

Answer: Yes. They asked me my regiment and division, and I answered that I served in the 216th Regiment of the 81st Division. Then they asked when the division had arrived at Kushka and from where, because they had not noticed such a large number of troops previously. I replied that we were activated in the town of Dzhambul and, in November 1941, were transferred to Kushka.

Question: Did they ask you about the organization of the division and the names of the commanding officers?

Answer: Yes. They asked me how many troops were stationed in Kushka, and I answered that there were very many, and then they asked why some were in service caps and others wore garrison caps. I replied that only officers wore service caps, and soldiers wore garrison caps. Concerning organization, I told them we were well organized and we will beat the Germans.

Question: What did they ask you about our weapons?

Answer: They asked me why our soldiers' rifles did not have Russian bayonets, and then they said that they had found a rifle lost by one of our soldiers and that this rifle was German, but with Persian inscriptions. I told them that I was illiterate and did not know what was inscribed on the rifle, but the rifles were actually German and that we had received them from Iran when our armies were there in 1941.

Question: Did you ask to remain in Afghanistan?

Answer: I did not ask to do so, but they offered to let me stay; however, I said I wanted to return to my own unit.

The records of the interrogation consisted of several pages, and the remaining questions are not of any special interest, but the answers were so naive and primitive that they could not in any way have added to the guilt of the accused. The questions and answers listed above served as the basis for finding the soldier guilty of divulging information of a military nature to a foreign government, a crime covered in Article 58, Paragraph 6 of the Criminal Code RSFSR, and for accusing him of spying for Afghanistan. The trial soon followed.

The military tribunal of the Central Asia Military District sentenced the soldier to be executed for desertion in wartime, transfer of allegiance to a foreign government, and espionage. The sentence was carried out.

In the field army the activity of the special sections, military tribunals, and military prosecuting magistries during the last war assumed the character of complete arbitrariness. Even the most elementary rules of inquiries and trial procedure were not observed. Even repressive measures by certain higher commanding officers against their subordinates assumed this same arbitrariness. Here are several examples.

In 1941, the 96th Ishhevsk Infantry Division first entered combat and took up a defensive position on the right bank of the Western Dvina, northwest of Vitebsk. Green and unused to battle conditions, the soldiers at the first artillery fire

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from the Germans began a hasty retreat. The commanders reestablished order with difficulty and the units of the division gradually began to reoccupy their old positions.

At that moment, Lieutenant General Yershakov, commanding the Twenty-Second Army, accompanied by one Shcherbin, the head of the army special section, came upon one of the regiments of the division which had not yet succeeded in re-occupying its positions. Finding the regimental commander and his regiment out of position and learning of their withdrawal from their positions, Yershakov personally shot the regimental commander.

Somewhat later that same year, to the staff of the same Twenty-Second Army, then commanded by Lieutenant General Yushkevich, in the region east of Velikiye Luki, came one Colonel Devi, the former commander of the Shaulay fortified area in Lithuania, who had broken out of a German encirclement.

Colonel Devi was entrusted with the defense of a 15-kilometer stretch of the front and had placed at his disposal the remnants of a routed artillery regiment consisting of 300 men, equipped only with rifles and automatic rifles.

Under the attack of the Germans this sector of the front was broken through, and Colonel Devi so notified by telephone the commander of the Twenty-Second Army, General Yushkevich. The general ordered him to appear immediately at army headquarters, and upon his arrival Devi was confronted by Yushkevich, the chief of the army special section, Shcherbin, and a member of the military council. Here followed an oral interrogation of Colonel Devi and he was informed that he had been sentenced to be shot. Colonel Devi fell on his knees and wept, begging them to listen to his explanation. After this he was "pardoned," but was sent directly from the army headquarters to a penal battalion as a private. He was killed in the first battle.

General Yushkevich now commands the Volga Military District.

In August 1943, in the region of Vyazma-Yatsevo on the central front, the 13th Cavalry Division of the 6th Guards Cavalry Corps was transferred from the advanced lines of the front to a spot 25 kilometers in the rear for reinforcement and reconstitution following prolonged combat service.

One soldier belonging to a mortar battery of the 46th Guards Regiment dropped his submachine gun and shot himself in the hand accidentally. The soldier was an outstanding soldier, a brave fighter who had been decorated several times. He was arrested that very day and, in spite of his protests and his defense by the regimental commander, the court convicted him the next morning of wounding himself to escape service at the front. After dinner that same day he was taken out and shot.

An endless number of such examples can be cited. Such arbitrariness is irresponsible and went unpunished, to say the least; it was even encouraged by the higher command.

In 1943, a law was passed by the Soviet government stating: "For leaving an occupied position without orders from a superior officer, even in the event of an attack of overwhelming strength by the enemy, the commanders of the units unable to hold their positions will be shot."

In 1943, this law was also passed: "For loss to the enemy or any loss of the regimental banner the commander of the regiment will face trial before a court of the military tribunal, and the unit will be disbanded." In addition, the old law "Surrender is tantamount to a betrayal of your country," that was introduced back in the days of the Finnish campaign was used widely during the last war and in the postwar period.

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The fear instilled in Soviet soldiers and officers by the might of the German invasion resulted in a reluctance to defend the socialist homeland. The Soviet government decided to wipe out this fear by terror and fear of repression. By threats of execution, the Soviet government forced its army to go into battle for the Soviet motherland and for Comrade Stalin.

To the usual functions of special sections of field armies, new duties are added and several were changed.

In wartime in the field army, special subdivisions are attached to the special staffs, and, depending upon the military unit to which such special sections are attached, these groups may range from entire companies attached to divisional special sections to whole regiments attached to army special sections. These groups, a part of the MGB troops, are designated for use as screening detachments in the rear of units "serviced" by these special sections. They are also used to carry out punitive measures.

In higher staffs, from the army level up, the special sections together with military intelligence and political sections acted as staffs for the partisan movement during the past war. They planned operations, trained special troops to be dropped behind the enemy, and organized activity behind enemy lines. Included in such activities were:

Organization and direction of the partisan movement.

Organizing the sending of diversionary and terroristic groups behind enemy lines.

Carrying on of close-in and distance reconnaissance in enemy territory.

Organization of acts of sabotage, wrecking, and disruption of war industries in enemy territory, and similar undermining activities.

Organization of counterespionage activity within their own lines.

The functions of special sections in field army areas are considerably expanded and enlarged, not only in respect to their own units and to organizing subversive and reconnaissance activity in the rear of enemy lines, but also in respect to the people living within the combat zone. Territorial organs of the Ministry of State Security, located in field army areas, are placed under the subordination of special sections of higher military staffs. Where such local organs are lacking, their functions are fulfilled by army special sections.

Both during the war and following its conclusion, the special sections of the Soviet Army played an important role in the occupied countries of Eastern Europe; their numbers were considerably increased, and their activities among the people and in the entire political, administrative, and economic life of the occupied countries were greatly broadened.

In recent times, the role of special sections in foreign countries where Soviet Army troops are stationed is not as important as it was in the first years of the postwar period since they have been replaced by special organs setup in the administrative system of the governments of the so-called countries of the people's democracies.

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